

P R E F A C E.

AS Prefaces are intended by Authors, either to explain the works to which they belong, and set forth their reasons for engaging in them, or to vindicate their writings from those reflections which may be cast upon them by the critical part of mankind; so the Editor of this compilation thinks it necessary to say something to this effect.

THE acts of Assembly of this State, constitute the material part of the Law, which is most requisite for the inhabitants to become acquainted with, being solely enacted and calculated for regulating their conduct, securing their religious, political and civil liberties, real and personal property, and settling their mutual obligations and ties one with another.

THIS work is committed to public attention, upon a presumption that a copious Abridgment of all the public acts of Assembly, will, if executed with any degree of accuracy, be extremely acceptable. Indeed the voluminous additions which have been made to the acts, since the compilation made by Hanson, and the defultory state of the whole, have rendered such a Publication very necessary.

ACTS which are obsolete, expired, or virtually repealed, still retain their places in the present collection; a circumstance which must perplex those who have occasion to consult that code, unless they possess a thorough knowledge of all the existing Laws, and are in perfect recollection of the various alterations which they have sustained.—Various acts, passed in explanation or amendment of others, which have introduced much confusion, and in many instances, created repugnancies not immediately reconcilable.

IN the following Abridgment, therefore, all acts now extinct, or of local or personal operation, have been rejected; and such only as are actually in force, and of general use retained.

WHERE the provisions of the Legislature remain unaltered, the acts are placed under each Title, being Alphabetically Digested in chronological order; but where they have received subsequent amendment, the explanatory and controuling clauses, are either incorporated with the original, or immediately referred to, under some other Title. The operative words of each act, have been carefully attended to and preserved, together with prescribed forms of Bonds, Oaths, and other legal proceedings. Thus the whole Law is retained, consolidated, and perspicuously displayed in the compass of a single volume.

PREFIXED